

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 206058
ORIGIN ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 L-01 SPTA-01 SS-14 INR-05 SP-02
PM-03 EB-04 /041 R

DRAFTED BY ARA/PAN:JWHITING/RWYROUGH
APPROVED BY S/PT:DPOPPER
ARA/PAN:JCHAAHR
L:MKOZAK
ARA:PVAKY

-----098376 151524Z /50

P 151451Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY PANAMA PRIORITY

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STADIS/////////////////////////////////
LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR, EWWT, US, PN

SUBJECT: PANAMA CANAL TREATY IMPLEMENTATION: EMBASSY
PARTICIPATION IN WORKING GROUP

REF: A) PANAMA 5677; B) STATE 156634

1. DEPARTMENT NOTES IN REF A THAT A DECISION CONCERNING
FULL EMBASSY MEMBERSHIP ON US-PANAMA BILATERAL WORKING
GROUP, THE FORERUNNER TO THE COORDINATING COMMITTEE, HAS
BEEN DEFERRED TEMPORARILY.

2. WE UNDERSTAND RATIONALE FOR TEMPORARILY DEFERRING LOCAL
RESOLUTION OF THIS MATTER, AND CAN ACCEPT THAT FOR TIME
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BEING, BUT WISH TO REITERATE POSITION STATED IN REF B THAT
FULL EMBASSY PARTICIPATION IS NECESSARY. ARGUMENTS FAVOR-
ING SUCH PARTICIPATION BEYOND OBSERVER STATUS INCLUDE THE
FOLLOWING:

A) FULL EMBASSY PARTICIPATION IS NEEDED SINCE THE BI-
LATERAL WORKING GROUP WILL PLAY A KEY ROLE DURING THIS

INTERIM PERIOD IN DEALING ON A ROUTINE BASIS WITH GOP
OFFICIALS CONCERNING THE MEANING AND IMPLEMENTATION OF
THE TREATY;

B) FULL EMBASSY PARTICIPATION ON THE WORKING GROUP
IS NECESSARY IN LIGHT OF THE AMBASSADOR'S FULL RESPONSIBILITY UNDER THE DRAFT IMPLEMENTING LEGISLATION (AS APPROVED BY WHITE HOUSE, OMB AND DOD) FOR COORDINATING THE TRANSFER OF FUNCTIONS FROM THE COMPANY/GOVERNMENT TO PANAMA.

C) WITHOUT FULL EMBASSY PARTICIPATION ON THE BILATERAL WORKING GROUP THE AMBASSADOR WOULD FACE CONSIDERABLE DIFFICULTY IN EXERCISING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES UNDER THE PROPOSED STATE-DEFENSE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING WHICH DETAILS THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE AMBASSADOR AND THE ADMINISTRATOR.

D) THE UTILITY OF AND PRECEDENT FOR FULL EMBASSY PARTICIPATION HAS BEEN CLEARLY ESTABLISHED IN CONNECTION WITH THE FUNCTIONING OF SIMILAR MILITARY COMMITTEES UNDER THE STATUS-OF-FORCES AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER COUNTRIES.

E) DURING JULY 1977 DRAFTING OF LANGUAGE OF TREATY AND RELATED AGREEMENTS (E.G. ARTICLE II AND AGREED MINUTE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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NO. TWO OF AGREEMENT IN IMPLEMENTATION OF ARTICLE III OF TREATY) IN WHICH PAN CANAL PARTICIPATED, IT WAS MADE CLEAR IN RESPONSE TO PAN CANAL CONCERNS THAT IN ACCORDANCE WITH SOFA PRECEDENTS US REPRESENTATIVE ON COORDINATING COMMITTEE AFTER TREATY IMPLEMENTATION WOULD BE SENIOR OFFICIAL FROM PANAMA CANAL COMMISSION. AT SAME TIME IT WAS CLEARLY UNDERSTOOD THAT UNDER SOFA PRECEDENT, EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVE (DCM OR OTHER APPROPRIATE OFFICER) WOULD HAVE FULL PARTICIPATION IN COORDINATING COMMITTEE (I.E. SERVING AS DEPUTY TO US REPRESENTATIVE). CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TREATY COMPLIANCE, MEMBERSHIP, CANALS, COMMITTEES
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 15 aug 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE206058
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: JWHITING/RWYROUGH
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780333-0905
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780863/aaaacada.tel
Line Count: 104
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7dfc8563-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: STADIS, LIMDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: STADIS, LIMDIS
Reference: 78 PANAMA 5677, 78 STATE 156634
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1735887
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PANAMA CANAL TREATY IMPLEMENTATION: EMBASSY PARTICIPATION IN WORKING GROUP
TAGS: PBOR, EWWT, US, PN
To: PANAMA
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7dfc8563-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014